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24

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PART 138

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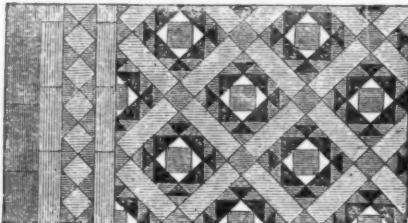
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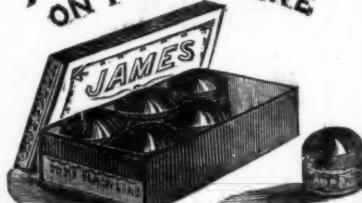
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SATURDAY, MAY 1 1880.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

THE DUKE'S CHILDREN.

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER LVII. THE MEETING AT THE BOBTAILED FOX.

IT was now the middle of December, and matters were not comfortable in the Runnymede country. The major with much pluck had carried on his operations in opposition to the wishes of the resident members of the hunt. The owners of coverts had protested, and farmers had sworn that he should not ride over their lands. There had even been some talk among the younger men of thrashing him if he persevered. But he did persevere, and had managed to have one or two good runs. Now it was the fortune of the Runnymede Hunt that many of those who rode with the hounds were strangers to the country—men who came down by train from London, gentlemen of perhaps no great distinction, who could ride hard, but as to whom it was thought that as they did not provide the land to ride over, or the fences to be destroyed, or the coverts for the foxes, or the greater part of the subscription, they ought not to oppose those by whom all these things were supplied. But the major, knowing where his strength lay, had managed to get a party to support him. The contract to hunt the country had been made with him in last March, and was good for one year. Having the kennels and the hounds under his command he did hunt the country; but he did so amidst a storm of contumely and ill will.

At last it was decided that a general meeting of the members of the hunt should be called together with the express object

of getting rid of the major. The gentlemen of the neighbourhood felt that the major was not to be borne, and the farmers were very much stronger against him than the gentlemen. It had now become a settled belief among sporting men in England that the major had, with his own hands, driven the nail into the horse's foot. Was it to be endured that the Runnymede farmers should ride to hounds under a master who had been guilty of such an iniquity as that? The Staines and Egham Gazette, which had always supported the Runnymede Hunt, declared in very plain terms that all who rode with the major were enjoying their sport out of the plunder which had been extracted from Lord Silverbridge. Then a meeting was called for Saturday, the 18th December, to be held at that well-known sporting little inn, The Bobtailed Fox. The members of the hunt were earnestly called upon to attend. It was—so said the printed summons which was issued—the only means by which the hunt could be preserved. If gentlemen who were interested did not put their shoulders to the wheel, the Runnymede Hunt must be regarded as a thing of the past. One of the notices was sent to the major with an intimation that, if he wished to attend, no objection would be made to his presence. The chair would be taken at half-past twelve punctually by that popular and well-known old sportsman, Mr. Mahogany Tops.

Was ever the master of a hunt treated in such a way! His presence not objected to! As a rule the master of a hunt does not attend hunt meetings, because the matter to be discussed is generally that of the money to be subscribed for him, as to which it is as well he should not hear the pros and

cons. But it is presumed that he is to be regarded as the hero of the hour, and that he is to be treated to his face, and spoken of behind his back, with love, admiration, and respect. But now this master was told his presence would be allowed; and then this fox-hunting meeting was summoned for half-past twelve on a hunting day—when, as all the world knew, the hounds were to meet at eleven, twelve miles off! Was ever anything so base? said the major to himself. But he resolved that he would be equal to the occasion. He immediately issued cards to all the members, stating that on that day the meet had been changed from Croppingham Bushes, which was ever so much on the other side of Bagshot, to The Bobtailed Fox—for the benefit of the hunt at large, said the card—and that the hounds would be there at half-past one.

Whatever might happen, he must show a spirit. In all this there were one or two of the London brigade who stood fast to him. "Cock your tail, Tifto," said one hard-riding supporter, "and show 'um you aren't afraid of nothing." So Tifto cocked his tail and went to the meeting in his best new scarlet coat, with his whitest breeches, his pinkest boots, and his neatest little bows at his knees. He entered the room with his horn in his hand, as a symbol of authority, and took off his hunting-cap to salute the assembly with a jaunty air. He had taken two glasses of cherry brandy, and, as long as the stimulant lasted, would no doubt be able to support himself with audacity.

Old Mr. Topps in rising from his chair did not say very much. He had been hunting in the Runnymede country for nearly fifty years, and had never seen anything so sad as this before. It made him, he knew, very unhappy. As for foxes, there were always plenty of foxes in his coverts. His friend Mr. Jawstock, on the right, would explain what all this was about. All he wanted was to see the Runnymede Hunt properly kept up. Then he sat down, and Mr. Jawstock rose to his legs.

Mr. Jawstock was a gentleman well known in the Runnymede country, who had himself been instrumental in bringing Major Tifto into these parts. There is often someone in a hunting country who never becomes a master of hounds himself, but who has almost as much to say about the business as the master himself. Sometimes at hunt meetings he is rather un-

popular, as he is always inclined to talk. But there are occasions on which his services are felt to be valuable, as were Mr. Jawstock's at present. He was about forty-five years of age, was not much given to riding, owned no coverts himself, and was not a man of wealth; but he understood the nature of hunting, knew all its laws, and was a judge of horses, of hounds—and of men; and could say a thing when he had to say it.

Mr. Jawstock sat on the right hand of Mr. Topps, and a place was left for the master opposite. The task to be performed was neither easy nor pleasant. It was necessary that the orator should accuse the gentleman opposite to him—a man with whom he himself had been very intimate—of iniquity so gross and so mean, that nothing worse can be conceived. "You are a swindler, a cheat, a rascal of the very deepest dye; a rogue so mean that it is revolting to be in the same room with you!" That was what Mr. Jawstock had to say. And he said it. Looking round the room, occasionally appealing to Mr. Topps, who on these occasions would lift up his hands in horror, but never letting his eye fall for a moment on the major, Mr. Jawstock told the story. "I did not see it done," said he. "I know nothing about it. I never was at Doncaster in my life. But you have evidence of what the Jockey Club thinks. The Master of our Hunt has been banished from racecourses." Here there was considerable opposition, and a few short but excited little dialogues were maintained, throughout all which Tifto restrained himself like a Spartan. "At any rate he has been thoroughly disgraced," continued Mr. Jawstock, "as a sporting man. He has been driven out of the Beargarden Club." "He resigned in disgust at their treatment," said a friend of the major's. "Then let him resign in disgust at ours," said Mr. Jawstock, "for we won't have him here. Caesar wouldn't keep a wife who was suspected of infidelity, nor will the Runnymede country endure a Master of Hounds who is supposed to have driven a nail into a horse's foot."

Two or three other gentlemen had something to say before the major was allowed to speak, the upshot of the discourse of all of them being the same. The major must go.

Then the major got up, and certainly, as far as attention went, he had full justice done him. However clamorous they might intend to be afterwards, that amount of

fair play they were all determined to afford him. The major was not excellent at speaking, but he did perhaps better than might have been expected.

"This is a very disagreeable position," he said—"very disagreeable, indeed. As for the nail in the horse's foot, I know no more about it than the babe unborn. But I've got two things to say, and I'll say what aren't the most consequence first. These hounds belong to me." Here he paused, and a loud contradiction came from many parts of the room. Mr. Jawstock, however, proposed that the major should be heard to the end. "I say they belong to me," repeated the major. "If anybody tries his hand at anything else the law will soon set that to rights. But that aren't of much consequence. What I've got to say is this. Let the matter be referred. If that 'orse had a nail run into his foot—and I don't say he hadn't—who was the man most injured? Why Lord Silverbridge. Everybody knows that. I suppose he dropped well on to eighty thousand pounds! I propose to leave it to him. Let him say. He ought to know more about it than anyone. He and I were partners in the horse. His lordship aren't very sweet upon me just at present. Nobody need fear that he'll do me a good turn. I say leave it to him."

In this matter the major had certainly been well advised. A rumour had become prevalent among sporting circles that Silverbridge had refused to condemn the major. It was known that he had paid his bets without delay, and that he had to some extent declined to take advice from the leaders of the Jockey Club. The major's friends were informed that the young lord had refused to vote against him at the club. Was it not more than probable that, if this matter were referred to him, he would refuse to give a verdict against his late partner?

The major sat down, put on his cap, and folded his arms akimbo, with his horn sticking out from his left hand. For a time there was general silence, broken, however, by murmurs in different parts of the room. Then Mr. Jawstock whispered something into the ear of the chairman, and Mr. Topps, rising from his seat, suggested to Tifto that he should retire.

"I think so," said Mr. Jawstock. "The proposition you have made can be discussed only in your absence."

Then the major held a consultation with one of his friends, and after that did retire.

When he was gone the real hubbub of the meeting commenced. There were some there who understood the nature of Lord Silverbridge's feelings in the matter. "He would be the last man in England to declare him guilty," said Mr. Jawstock. "Whatever my lord says, he shan't ride across my land," said a farmer in the background. "I don't think any gentleman ever made a fairer proposition, since anything was anything," said a friend of the major's, a gentleman who kept livery-stables in Long Acre. "We won't have him here," said another farmer; whereupon Mr. Topps shook his head sadly. "I don't think any gentleman ought to be condemned without a 'earing," said one of Tifto's admirers, "and where you're to get anyone to hunt the country like him, I don't know as anybody is prepared to say." "We'll manage that," said a young gentleman from the neighbourhood of Bagshot, who thought that he could hunt the country himself quite as well as Major Tifto. "He must go from here; that's the long and the short of it," said Mr. Jawstock. "Put it to the vote, Mr. Jawstock," said the livery-stable keeper. Mr. Topps, who had had great experience in public meetings, hereupon expressed an opinion that they might as well go to a vote. No doubt he was right if the matter was one which must sooner or later be decided in that manner.

Mr. Jawstock looked round the room trying to calculate what might be the effect of a show of hands. The majority was with him; but he was well aware that of his majority some few would be drawn away by the apparent justice of Tifto's proposition. And what was the use of voting? Let them vote as they might, it was out of the question that Tifto should remain master of the hunt. But the chairman had acceded, and on such occasions it is difficult to go against the chairman.

Then there came a show of hands: first for those who desired to refer the matter to Lord Silverbridge, and afterwards for Tifto's direct enemies—for those who were anxious to banish Tifto out of hand, without reference to any one. At last the matter was settled. To the great annoyance of Mr. Jawstock and the farmers, the meeting voted that Lord Silverbridge should be invited to give his opinion as to the innocence or guilt of his late partner.

The major's friends carried the decision out to him as he sat on horseback, as though he had altogether gained the battle,

and was secure in his position as master of the Runnymede Hunt for the next dozen years. But at the same time there came a message from Mr. Mahogany Tops. It was now half-past two, and Mr. Tops expressed a hope that Major Tifto would not draw the country on the present occasion. The major, thinking that it might be as well to conciliate his enemies, rode solemnly and slowly home to Tallyho Lodge in the middle of his hounds.

CHAPTER LVIII. THE MAJOR IS DEPOSED.

WHEN Silverbridge undertook to return with Tregear to London, instead of going off direct to Matching, it is to be feared that he was simply actuated by a desire to postpone his further visit to his father's house. He had thought that Lady Mabel would surely be gone before his task at Polpenno was completed. As soon as he should again find himself in his father's presence he would at once declare his intention of marrying Isabel Boncassen. But he could not see his way to doing it while Lady Mabel should be in the house.

"I think you will find Mabel still at Matching," said Tregear on their way up. "She will wait for you, I fancy."

"I don't know why she should wait for me," said Silverbridge almost angrily.

"I thought that you and she were fast friends."

"I suppose we are—after a fashion. She might wait for you, perhaps."

"I think she would—if I could go there."

"You are much thicker with her than I ever was. You went to see her at Grex, when nobody else was there."

"Is Miss Cassewary nobody?"

"Next door to it," said Silverbridge, half jealous of the favours shown to Tregear.

"I thought," said Tregear, "that there would be a closer intimacy between you and her."

"I don't know why you should think so."

"Had you never any such idea yourself?"

"I haven't any now—so there may be an end of it. I don't think a fellow ought to be cross-questioned on such a subject."

"Then I am very sorry for Mabel," said Tregear. This was uttered solemnly, so that Silverbridge found himself debarred from making any flippant answer. He could not altogether defend himself. He had been quite justified, he thought, in changing his mind, but he did not like to own that he had changed it so quickly.

"I think we had better not talk any more about it," he said, after pausing for a few moments. After that nothing more was said between them on the subject.

Up in town Silverbridge spent two or three days pleasantly enough, while a thunderbolt was being prepared for him, or rather, in truth, two thunderbolts. During these days he was much with Tregear; and though he could not speak freely of his own matrimonial projects, still he was brought round to give some sort of assent to the engagement between Tregear and his sister. This new position which his friend had won for himself did in some degree operate on his judgment. It was not, perhaps, that he himself imagined that Tregear as a member of Parliament would be worthier, but that he fancied that such would be the duke's feelings. The duke had declared that Tregear was nobody. That could hardly be said of a man who had a seat in the House of Commons; certainly could not be said by so staunch a politician as the duke.

But, had he known of those two thunderbolts, he would not have enjoyed his time at the Beargarden. The thunderbolts fell upon him in the shape of two letters which reached his hands at the same time, and were as follows :

"The Bobtailed Fox, Egham,
"December 18th.

"MY LORD,—At a meeting held in this house to-day in reference to the hunting of the Runnymede country, it was proposed that the management of the hounds should be taken out of the hands of Major Tifto in consequence of certain conduct of which it is alleged that he was guilty at the last Doncaster races.

"Major Tifto was present, and requested that your lordship's opinion should be asked as to his guilt. I do not know myself that we are warranted in troubling your lordship on the subject. I am, however, commissioned by the majority of the gentlemen who were present to ask you whether you think that Major Tifto's conduct on that occasion was of such a nature as to make him unfit to be the depositary of that influence, authority, and intimacy which ought to be at the command of a Master of Hounds.

"I feel myself bound to inform your lordship that the hunt generally will be inclined to place great weight upon your opinion; but that it does not undertake to reinstate Major Tifto, even should your

opinion be in his favour.—I have the honour to be, my lord, your lordship's most obedient servant,

“JEREMIAH JAWSTOCK.

“Juniper Lodge, Staines.”

Mr. Jawstock, when he had written this letter, was proud of his own language, but still felt that the application was a very lame one. Why ask any man for an opinion, and tell him at the same time that his opinion might probably not be taken? And yet no other alternative had been left to him. The meeting had decided that the application should be made; but Mr. Jawstock was well aware that, let the young lord's answer be what it might, the major would not be endured as master in the Runnymede country. Mr. Jawstock felt that the passage in which he explained that a Master of Hounds should be a depository of influence and intimacy was good; but yet the application was lame, very lame.

Lord Silverbridge as he read it thought that it was very unfair. It was a most disagreeable thunderbolt. Then he opened the second letter, of which he well knew the handwriting. It was from the major. Tifto's letters were very legible, but the writing was cramped, showing that the operation had been performed with difficulty. Silverbridge had hoped that he might never receive another epistle from his late partner. The letter, as follows, had been drawn out for Tifto in rough by the livery-stable keeper in Long Acre.

“MY DEAR LORD SILVERBRIDGE,—I venture respectfully to appeal to your lordship for an act of justice. Nobody has more of a true-born Englishman's feeling of fair play between man and man than your lordship; and as you and me have been a good deal together, and your lordship ought to know me pretty well, I venture to appeal to your lordship for a good word.

“All that story from Doncaster has got down into the country where I am M.F.H. Nobody could have been more sorry than me that your lordship dropped your money. Would not I have been prouder than anything to have a horse in my name win the race! Was it likely I should lame him? Anyways I didn't, and I don't think your lordship thinks it was me. Of course your lordship and me is two now; but that don't alter the facts.

“What I want is your lordship to send me a line, just stating your lordship's

opinion that I didn't do it, and didn't have nothing to do with it; which I didn't. There was a meeting at The Bobtailed Fox yesterday, and the gentlemen was all of a mind to go by what your lordship would say. I couldn't desire nothing fairer. So I hope your lordship will stand to me now, and write something that will pull me through.—With all respects I beg to remain, your lordship's most dutiful servant,

“T. TIFTO.”

There was something in this letter which the major himself did not quite approve. There was an absence of familiarity about it which annoyed him. He would have liked to call upon his late partner to declare that a more honourable man than Major Tifto had never been known on the turf. But he felt himself to be so far down in the world that it was not safe for him to hold an opinion of his own, even against the livery-stable keeper!

Silverbridge was for a time in doubt whether he should answer the letters at all, and if so how he should answer them. In regard to Mr. Jawstock and the meeting at large, he regarded the application as an impertinence. But as to Tifto himself he vacillated much between pity, contempt, and absolute condemnation. Everybody had assured him that the man had certainly been guilty. The fact that he had made bets against their joint horse—bets as to which he had said nothing till after the race was over—had been admitted by himself. And yet it was possible that the man might not be such a rascal as to be unfit to manage the Runnymede hounds. Having himself got rid of Tifto, he would have been glad that the poor wretch should have been left with his hunting honours. But he did not think that he could write to his late partner any letter that would preserve those honours to him.

At Tregear's advice he referred the matter to Mr. Lupton. Mr. Lupton was of opinion that both the letters should be answered, but that the answer to each should be very short. “There is a prejudice about the world just at present,” said Mr. Lupton, “in favour of answering letters. I don't see why I am to be subjected to an annoyance because another man has taken a liberty. But it is better to submit to public opinion. Public opinion thinks that letters should be answered.” Then Mr. Lupton dictated the answers.

“Lord Silverbridge presents his compliments to Mr. Jawstock, and begs to say

that he does not feel himself called upon to express any opinion as to Major Tifto's conduct at Doncaster."

That was the first. The second was rather less simple, but not much longer.

"SIR—I do not feel myself called upon to express any opinion either to you or to others as to your conduct at Doncaster. Having received a letter on the subject from Mr. Jawstock, I have written to him to this effect.—Your obedient servant,

"SILVERBRIDGE.

"To T. Tifto, Esq., Tallyho Lodge."

Poor Tifto, when he got this very curt epistle was broken-hearted. He did not dare to show it. Day after day he told the livery-stable keeper that he had received no reply, and at last asserted that his appeal had remained altogether unanswered. Even this he thought was better than acknowledging the rebuff which had reached him. As regarded the meeting which had been held—and any further meetings which might be held—at The Bobtailed Fox, he did not see the necessity, as he explained to the livery-stable keeper, of acknowledging that he had written any letter to Lord Silverbridge.

The letter to Mr. Jawstock was of course brought forward. Another meeting at The Bobtailed Fox was convened. But in the meantime hunting had been discontinued in the Runnymede country. The major with all his pluck, with infinite cherry-brandy, could not do it. Men who had a few weeks' since been on very friendly terms, and who called each other Dick and Harry when the squabble first began, were now talking of "punching" each other's heads. Special whips had been procured by men who intended to ride, and special bludgeons by the young farmers who intended that nobody should ride as long as Major Tifto kept the hounds. It was said that the police would interfere. It was whispered that hounds would be shot, though Mr. Topps, Mr. Jawstock, and others declared that no crime so heinous as that had ever been contemplated in the Runnymede country.

The difficulties were too many for poor Tifto, and the hounds were not brought out again under his influence.

A second meeting was summoned, and an invitation was sent to the major similar to that which he had before received; but on this occasion he did not appear. Nor were there many of the gentlemen down

from London. This second meeting might almost have been select. Mr. Mahogany Topps was there of course, in the chair, and Mr. Jawstock took the place of honour and of difficulty on his right hand. There was the young gentleman from Bagshot, who considered himself quite fit to take Tifto's place if somebody else would pay the bills and settle the money, and there was the sporting old parson from Croppingham. Three or four other members of the hunt were present, and perhaps half-a-dozen farmers, ready to declare that Major Tifto should never be allowed to cross their fields again.

But there was no opposition. Mr. Jawstock read the young lord's note, and declared that it was quite as much as he expected. He considered that the note, short as it was, must be decisive. Major Tifto, in appealing to Lord Silverbridge, had agreed to abide by his lordship's answer, and that answer was now before them. Mr. Jawstock ventured to propose that Major Tifto should be declared to be no longer Master of the Runnymede Hounds. The parson from Croppingham seconded the proposition, and Major Tifto was formally deposed.

STRANGE PROFESSIONS IN JAPAN.

No one wandering through the teeming streets of a large Japanese town can help wondering how one half of the inhabitants gain their livelihood.

There is so much apparent idleness, and tobacco-smoking, and tea-drinking, and crouching over brasiers with novels, and midday napping, that in a great social hive like the city of Yedo the drones seem to outnumber the working bees by ten to one. Yet such is not the case, for although thoroughly Oriental in their love of the siesta and their abhorrence of hurry and excitement, in business matters the Japanese are too numerous and too poor a race to be able to give up much time to real unadulterated idleness. The great broad-shouldered fellows who always seem to be lounging about wine-shops, or basking at sunny corners, have their occupations; and it is in tracing out these strange professions that so much that is amusing and interesting may be extracted during an observant walk in the great city.

The Japanese are great wanderers—not travellers, for until quite recently it was

quite exceptional to meet a Japanese away from the shores of his own bright islands—and the average lower middle and lower class Japanese knows far more of his own country than a man of the corresponding status in Great Britain, backed and aided as the latter may be by the enterprise of excursion agents and railway companies. Hence it is not remarkable that so large a proportion of seeming idlers gain a living in a Bohemian, trampish, hand-to-mouth sort of manner. A few types taken at random from the crowd may suffice as an illustration.

Late in the evenings, when the shutters of shops and offices are close-drawn, when the lanterns at the fire-stations are lighted, when song and merriment commences at the tea-houses, and when weary hear-sick sons of toil, millionaires, grandes, and coolies have thrown aside the robes of office and implements of trade in exchange for peace and ease, the "chiffonnier" wanders forth. We choose the French word, not only because the native word is of a dreadful length, but because the French expresses the trade of the man exactly. He is armed with a long two-pronged bamboo, and carries, over his left arm, a basket, into which he forces all sorts of odd rubbish and unconsidered trifles. Externally he appears to be a consolidated mass of what he picks up, for nothing is visible of his face but a pair of quick glancing eyes, and there is scarcely a square inch of whole garment upon him. He rarely raises his eyes from the ground, and moves at a slouching crawl, stopping now and then to sort some especially tempting heap of filth, and pronging the odds and ends into his basket. No one notices him, for he creeps along under the shadow of the houses, making no sound with his straw-bound feet, and living in his own little world of dirt and evil smells. Yet, dirty and miserable as he appears—a very Pariah amongst men—his calling is by no means an unimportant one. That collection of many-coloured bits of filthy paper in his basket will be ground to pulp, prepared, and turned out as tough, serviceable material in less than a week's time. The leaves of the last new romance, turned over by the dainty fingers of the Japanese belle in her boudoir, the yellow proclamations of the Imperial Government, the white, semi-transparent windows of the great castles, the gorgeous lanterns of the big tea-house, are all made from the scraps picked up by the chiffonnier, whilst for the fish-bones, pieces of broken metal, and

cinders, there are endless uses. Moreover, it is a lucrative calling, for pickers-up of odd scraps and fragments have risen to wealth and position; and one of the most famous restaurants in the gay quarter of the great city is owned by one who, for forty years, slouched about back slums with his basket and prong of bamboo.

On the bright mornings of spring and early summer, one may observe the sparrow-catcher on his rounds. There is none of the boldness and self-reliance about the Yedo sparrow, which is so characteristic of our dusky little London friends: he is of a confiding nature, and more inquisitive, and his simplicity and curiosity lead him into situations of risk and peril which the London bird seems instinctively to avoid. Hence it is that, long before the "jinrickisha" coolies have taken up their position under the castle walls with their carriages; before even the fisherman, with his rod and basket, has perched himself on one of the stone copings of the moat, in preparation for a day's game of patience with the treasures hidden by the lotus leaves; before the shaggy-pated, bow-legged little officials have swaggered off to their offices, the sparrow-catcher is up and doing. His weapons are very simple: a bird-call, a long pole smeared with bird-lime, and a cage. At a distance we can watch him without spoiling his game. He knows that the birds love the heavy old eaves of the gateways to the palaces of the great men, and he creeps along the walls until within pole's distance. Then he starts a chirping and a twittering which no bird can resist. Two or three little heads peep from their hiding-places under the great, quaintly-carved rafters; a bold bird hops out to verify with his eyes what he has heard with his ears; the bamboo rod slides up gently, the rash sparrow hops on to it, and returns no more to the home-nest. Strangely blind to the result of doing likewise, other birds hop out as the twittering and chirping continues; and as one after the other hop on to the fated stick, very soon the gateway is denuded of its inhabitants. Those sparrows will be exposed to-day for sale in the streets, and bought up by the caterers from the tea-houses, who know that very few gourmets can resist sparrows toasted, with a little hot sauce.

A very prominent personage amongst those who cater for the amusement of a Japanese crowd is the story-teller.

Inasmuch as he has a large booth to himself, and is looked upon as a reliable authority upon all matters pertaining to mythology, legends, and child stories, he would clap his hand to the hilt of his sword with disgust if the notion was mooted that he was a brother professional of the numberless quacks and mountebanks who swarm in a mirth-loving, simple-minded city like Yedo.

His temple is a shed of matting supported by sticks, under which stretch rows of rough forms. He sits on a raised dais, with his fan, his cup, and his teapot on one side. As his lectures, or stories, or recitations are given from memory, he has no book or even paper of notes ; he adapts his discourses to his audience, who squat on the settles, smoking incessantly, listening with rapt attention, and perfectly silent, except when some especially telling bit extorts a simultaneous screech of approval. A cluster of young bloods swagger in. After three sharp raps with the fan, a cup of cunningly-concocted tea, and a preliminary clearing of the throat, he begins, not, however, before he has saluted the audience, no matter how small, with three bows expressive of his being their obedient humble servant. It will probably be a legend of the good old days of Gonghen Sama—a relation of hair-breadth adventures in the cause of chivalry, battles, murders, suicides, all pointing to the triumph of virtue and the fall of vice, and all illustrated with extraordinary facial contortion and gesticulation. The young men like this sort of thing : their blood runs fast, and their hearts beat as they hear of the prowess and glory of their ancestors, and make invidious comparisons between the age when the land of the Rising Sun stood alone in her beauty, untainted by the evil influences of Western so-called civilisation, and the present degenerate days. Enter a group of damsels and children, spick and span with gay dresses and bright faces, all giggling and nudging one another. The lecturer changes his theme, completely dropping his melodramatic air for a simple, artless manner, and begins one of those inimitable little child stories or home legends with which Japanese mothers have from time immemorial lulled their babes to sleep, and from which not a few of our modern nursery legends are derived. The flutter and restlessness of the audience subside into silent attention, save when a laugh or a cry is irresistible ; and when, at the

expiration of ten minutes or so, the fan is sent round for the cash offerings, all rise with a feeling of having thoroughly enjoyed themselves, pay their mites, and tumble into the outer air with a burst of merriment and laughter. Should there be an appearance of staidness and stolidity about the listeners, the reader can shift his tone and suit it admirably to the circumstances. He retails, with an earnest, parental air, pithy little pieces of advice, home-thrusts at foibles and weaknesses, playful banterings with domestic faults, sometimes rolled into a sort of sermon, sometimes given out disjointedly and with an accidental sort of manner. At any rate he manages to please all who come to listen, and at the end of a long summer's day his receipts must very amply repay him for his exhaustion.

Bearing in mind the simple, childish character of the Japanese lower orders, it is not to be wondered at that cakemen and retailers of sweetstuff are such very prominent features of holiday crowds, and that they should be characterised by peculiarities. Japanese meals commence with sweets ; sugared fruits and candies are offered to weary travellers at the meanest of road-side resting-places ; children live and grow up in an atmosphere of continual sweetness ; and at the marriage or funeral feast the sweatmeat-tray shares the place of honour with the teacup and the tobacco-pipe. And the cakemen who wander about the capital are individually as well known as the great princes or leading actors. They are clever, nimble-fingered, glib-tongued fellows, somewhat Bohemian in dress and manner, and universally popular. See how the children—not necessarily young—flock round them on their progress—one man especially, whose “beat” lay along the great main street of the city, attracted far more attention than would have done the Mikado in his ill-fitting foreign dress, as he sauntered along crying, “Now for peerless sweets of all shapes and sizes ! Now, my little beauties, out with your cash, and see what Sinjo the cakeman will give you !” And the chubby-cheeked, rosy-lipped little ones flocked to him as fish to a tempting bait. “What will you have my little maid, or my little lord ?” And the children choose the shape which their sweet is to take. Perhaps a fish, or a coolie with his baskets, or a pack-horse, or a warrior—no matter what. With a little skilful manipulation of his stuff, Sinjo never failed to produce the desired

design, and in a very few seconds the delighted child was running off with the prize. All the while his tongue kept up a running fire of joke and chaff, now at a white-teethed lass, advising her to keep herself always sweet and attractive by eating sweets; now at a broken-down toothless old coolie, recommending him to start life again with new teeth; now with a sly remark as to the subject in hand; now a story, now a song. So his tongue rarely ceased to wag, or his fingers to move, until he disappeared. Men say that he loved saki not wisely but too well, and that he toppled over, one dark evening, into the castle-moat, basket, sweetstuff and all. Notwithstanding the fact that cakemen, quite as skilful and quite as loquacious, abound, it will be long ere the memory of Sinjo is forgotten.

A great contrast to the easy-living, mirth-loving cakeman is afforded by the poor women who wander about as minstrels. They are, as a rule, of the Eta class—a class until quite lately considered as the pariahs of the Japanese people. They lived by themselves, governed themselves, spoke a dialect of their own, and bore without remonstrance the blows, ridicule, and insults of the very lowest of men not born Etas. Even now, after advanced civilisation and enlightened views as to the position of man to man have been so spread abroad, and have swept away arbitrary distinctions of most sorts, the Etas are a race apart. Although sharing the commonwealth, and governed by the same laws as other subjects of the mikado, they are still despised and rejected of men. Marriage with an Eta woman still involves loss of caste; riches, honour, and position are denied to Eta men, and the most humble and degrading of trades are monopolised by them. Many of the Eta women gain a livelihood as wandering minstrels, and there is something very sad about them as they glide noiselessly about, with their wan, imploring faces, amidst the bustle and joviality of a popular festival. Their thin, worn sandals cannot prevent the stones from wounding their feet; the burning sun's rays or the drenching rains beat through their poor, ragged, bamboo hats; very rarely do their songs breathe joy and gladness, for the wretched, patched-up strings are only tuned to dirges and laments. Now and then a kind heart has pity, and a kind hand puts money into the hat held out. If the face of the singer be pretty, she may be commanded to perform for a length of time,

but far more often the poor broken voices rise to the sweet scented air, and to the blue heaven which peeps between the lattice-work of leaves, unheeded and unrewarded. And their solitude renders them all the more pitiful to behold. The young rakes, flushed with wine, jostle against them; haughty beauties, in silken attire, shrink from them as from a pestilence, and one wonders how they live. Yet there is much that is good and noble in them. Fellow feeling seems to be wondrously strong amongst them. One frequently may see a girl leading her blind mother, or her crippled father, through the fairs and busy streets, and it is known that members of the race have often rejected offers of elevation and enfranchisement. We can rarely mix with a great pleasure-making Yedo crowd without meeting the white-clad Eta minstrels; and as they glide about, tuning the strings of their guitars, one feels the pity-chords of the heart touched to the quick.

From this sad little picture, it is pleasing to turn to the loud joviality of the quack doctor. He may not be a nomad, or he may: most often he is. The quack doctor who is not in the streets, but is consulted and prescribes at his own house, has been, at some time or other, an ambulant humbug. Some of them travel the length of the land, for their impostures are often so palpable that subsequent recognition might procure for them something more than a rough reception. There was one Doctor Desaburo, who regularly attended the great fair at Uweno, near Yedo, under different disguises. Once he had actually the impudence to assume moustachios and whiskers, put on a second-hand black dress-suit, speak with a foreign accent, and pass for a distinguished English medicine-man. The quack trades almost entirely with the lower classes. He must be of imposing aspect, and carefully or fantastically dressed, for none are such believers that "apparel oft doth proclaim the man" as the Japanese. On a table in front of him stand bottles, and packets, and trays of every sort of known medical rubbish. One day, Desaburo ran short of ginger-candy—his favourite remedy for indigestion—but was quite equal to the emergency, for he prescribed tooth-ache remedies, spasm cures, ague and fever antidotes instead with perfect aplomb and self-possession. On another occasion a clown, to whom at one time he had given the candy and at another the fever-cooling medicine, without any cure of

the indigestion, attacked him with a stout bamboo, and so belaboured him that he was glad to escape with his life, leaving his stiffs to the mercy of an angry crowd. A mother, whose son he had nearly killed by an overdose of opium sedative, was for exposing him at law, but he compounded for the little error somehow. However, his success completely overbalanced these little difficulties, and he made a heap of money. His specialty was a powder, which should cure any ailment, from old age to a tooth-ache. This he sold in gorgeous boxes to an enormous extent, chattering volubly and blowing his own trumpet vociferously as he packed up and distributed the boxes. It is surprising that a people should continue to be cajoled by pretenders like Desaburo, yet to this day, by visiting the fairs either of the capital or the country, one may see them in full swing, sweeping into their tills the hard-earned cash of the poor dolts, who regard them almost as supernatural beings.

It is impossible to help laughing at the little Japanese policemen, with their mushroom-shaped hats, their little bow-legs, and their poor little feet pushed into stiff, unbending European shoes; and it may be a fact that they are no more useful than ornamental; but certain it is that since the organisation of the body upon the European plan a very serious blow has been dealt to a profession which once numbered its members by thousands. The rōnin, or robber, or wanderer, or knight-errant, as the case might be, was a being peculiarly Japanese. He partook of the nature of the Italian bandit, the Spanish guerilla, the English highwayman, and the Australian "larrikin"—yet was none of these. At one time there was something "Turpinesque" about him; at the present there is more of the area-sneak. He was often of good family and education—most often a retainer of some disbanded feudal household. He was not over scrupulous in the matter of shedding human blood, but he respected the laws of meum and tuum much as Robin Hood or Rob Roy are said to have respected them, and generally roamed in fulfilment of some vow, or with some mission in view. When, however, the new order of things came to be established in Japan, and the great lords were deprived of their power, the land was overrun by starving, sturdy men-at-arms, brought up to a contempt for any trade but that of fighting, and, in that only, differing from

the swarms of "sturdy beggars" who infested England after the dissolution of the monasteries; and, although many have been drafted into the imperial army and the police, the rōnin still exists as a sort of mongrel specimen. He lurks about the dark corners of the suburbs through which the great roads from the country pass, and pounces upon poor travellers arriving footsore and weary from long tramps; or he decoys them to tea-houses of evil fame, wherein they are certain to be drugged, robbed, and possibly murdered; or he sneaks about looking for half-opened shutters and deserted rooms, wherefrom he may pick up unconsidered trifles. There is not an atom of romance or chivalry about the modern rōnin. An armed man of his own size he will never attack, but for damsels running errands, aged pilgrims, and gaping rustics he has a keen eye. Sometimes the rōnin takes service with a European as "boy." The result is invariably wholesale robbery; and of late years the number of daring burglaries at lonely bungalows has been alarmingly great. If caught, however, he meets with no mercy, and the writer once saw seven members of the profession marched from the gaol near Yokohama, on a cold autumn morning, to an elevated piece of ground, and executed in a very few moments.

A capital veil for idleness and humbug is the calling of the mendicant priest. Members of this profession are to be met with all over Japan, at all seasons of the year; and from their number, together with the well-to-do appearance of many of them, we may judge that the dodge is a lucrative one. Ostensibly pilgrims, engaged in the fulfilment of some vow, or atoning for some past misdeed, they are in reality but beggars, and, like the quack doctors, are looked up to by the poor folk with reverence and esteem. One old humbug—the outward semblance of all that was holy and self-denying; especially the latter, as he was horribly dirty—the writer used to meet half-a-dozen times a year, until at last he was really ashamed and disappeared. When he was near a sort of leer was in his eye, as much as to say: 'You know me, and know I'm humbugging these poor people, but they don't see through it, so keep it dark.' He stuck to me once for three days; how he kept up the pace I cannot conceive, unless he started at very early morning; and he ended by going off with a pair of my knickerbocker stockings. Though their humbug is so transparent to the European,

to the simple villagers they are engaged in a holy work. Their (more or less) white dress, their amulets, charms, and reliques, their humble, suppliant faces, and their oily tongues, are passports everywhere, for no one dare refuse shelter, food, or pecuniary aid to a pilgrim. And, considering that their pilgrimages extend over the best years of their lives, a very neat thing must be made out of them.

Many of them sham blindness, and gain admission to the tea-houses as "Ammás" or shampooers, the shampooing operation consisting of rubbing and thumping the back and loins vigorously. This, by the way, is not at all disagreeable after a hard day's walking.

Last of the queer callings to be noticed is that of the "Geysha," or singing and dancing-girl. Geyshas may be hired at a few minutes' notice in all the great towns of the empire. As a rule they are comely, modest damsels, although in obedience to the refined taste of a certain class of foreigners, a school possessing as little of one quality as of the other has sprung up. To the ceremonial feasts of rich men singing and dancing-girls are the invariable appendages, and are not unfrequently treated rather as guests than as hired servants. As a rule they perform in pairs; one playing the guitar while the other sings or dances; but quartettes and choruses may be had for payment. It is never etiquette to treat them as professionals; the hint for performing should be given incidentally, and on no account is the payment for their services to be made openly, but is to be pushed under their rice-bowl in a piece of paper, so that it is discovered as it were by accident. With the Geyshas proper often come the dancing girls so-called, although "posturers" would be a more correct expression, inasmuch as Japanese dancing consists entirely of a series of graceful ankle and hand twisting positions, quite independent of any musical accompaniment. Good singing and dancing girls earn large sums of money, and famous ones must be booked beforehand; but in their performances, whether of singing or posturing, there is very little to charm the European sense, and a very few minutes suffices to render the performance very boring.

Within this small space we have endeavoured to describe some of the queer callings of every-day Japanese life. In a country which is undergoing such vast and rapid changes too much haste cannot

be made to see, as it yet exists, what may in a very short time be completely a thing of the past—the old untainted Japanese life.

LOCKED-UP LAND.

IN TWO PARTS. PART I.

A SHORT time ago I was seated at dinner next to an English matron, not of the precise type satirised by the late Mr. Hawthorne as the "female Bull," but yet of an order of beauty tending in that direction. She was fair and tall, and of sufficiently ample figure to give majesty to her commanding manner. Sprung from the Tory branch of a great English family, the other wing whereof is Whig, she was merciful to the views I was compelled to enunciate on various political subjects. For they were talking politics all round the table, and nothing but politics, after the agreeable custom which came in about three years ago, and has since done much to make social enjoyment impossible. In town-house or country-house it has been all the same, the sole advantage of town over country being that one could not be "got at" by political gossips till dinner-time. In another person's country-house the duty of discussing what are called "stirring" subjects, probably because they are all stir and no pudding, is not so easy to escape, especially if one be an elderly person, no longer equal to the sports of the field. Very nearly maddened by the political and, what is worse, purely party talk around me on the evening in question, I turned malevolent after the manner of elderly people; and when my beautiful friend enquired: "What cry have you? What do you want to destroy now?" I suddenly turned upon her with the observation that the next thing doomed, not by me, but by inexorable fate, to destruction, was the whole system of land laws now existing, including primogeniture, settlement, and entail. I had no sooner murmured this in my most mellifluous tones than I regretted the rash deed. Her ladyship was in the act of conveying to her rosy lips a morsel of a delicious concoction of *pâté de foie gras*. The liver of the martyred goose had by the magic of an accomplished chef been translated to a light feathery suspicion of its original richness and weight. No entrée was ever more delightfully conceived or more admirably carried out. But British matronhood, fond as it is of good things—overfond, crede Hawthorne—and fully

informed of its own wisdom and mastery, for once was taken aback. It was quite evident that my wild words had destroyed the succulence of the goose-liver, and deprived the truffle of its savour. "If you once touch the land, it is all over with England." Thus far Lady Fitzhalbert, who, neglecting her dinner for nearly five minutes, during which the only sustenance she took was a large glass of champagne, proceeded to tell me that no attempt of the kind would be tolerated. "What," said she, bringing her fine porcelain-blue eyes upon me with a glance of peculiar stoniness—"What would become of all the greatest families in England if you confiscated their property?" In reply I merely said that neither Nokes nor Stokes, Byles nor Styles, contemplated anything like confiscation. "Simply," I added cheerily, "a sort of Encumbered Estates Act. Give everybody his own. Cut off entails, and give everybody plenty of ready money." It wouldn't do. Lady Fitzhalbert, whom I worship as a superior being, was not to be pacified. "What is to become of us all?" she said pitifully. "The moment we get into debt, or our husband's horses don't win, or we fight a losing county election, we are to be sold up, and the grocer in the next town is to reign in our stead."

Now as I happen to know that Lady Fitzhalbert's maternal grandfather was a successful barber, and that her actual living uncle is a fishmonger, I was inclined to make a remark which might have shut me for ever out of Barkmore Castle, but luckily at this juncture came another dish, so I allowed her ladyship to have it all her own way, and went on tranquilly eating my dinner, pondering meanwhile on many things. They are tractable, these lords of the soil, when it is only a question of foreign politics, and can speak well of their rivals at elections if the rivals spring from their own class, but the instant any attempt is made to invade their own privileges and customs, they "rear up" directly. "Touch the land," that is to say, the law of primogeniture and entail, "and there is an end of England." This is the voice of the richer landowners, who strive by every possible means to prevent their estates—that is to say, their political importance—from diminishing. There are exceptions, of course. There are peers who loathe the law of entail, and would rejoice exceedingly if they had power to sell one half of their property to pay off the settlements and mortgages

on the whole, and thus have an unencumbered half to transmit to their own posterity. But these are few and far between, the general sentiment of the landholding class being as I have described it. Their position is precisely that of the Puritans in dealing with the North American natives: "The Lord has given the land unto his saints. We are his saints; therefore the land is ours." Q.E.D. So strongly is this sentiment implanted in the landholding breast that there may be no weak trifling on the score of ownership. The land is the property, not of any person, but of a family.

Lord Puntmore's property, his hundred thousand acres, cannot be called his own. He does not call it his own. "Wish I could, by Jupiter," that frank, outspoken nobleman will tell you. It is not his own, albeit he is the Earl of Puntmore in the peerage of England, besides being Viscount Castletoddie in the peerage of Scotland, and holding the Irish barony of Knockthunder. His property no more belongs to him than to the man in the moon. He cannot sell a rood, pole, or perch of it. He cannot lease it except on certain terms duly laid down. He cannot cut a tree down without the consent of his trustees. He is bound hand and foot as a sort of sandwich between the corpse of his father and the ungainly carcase of Castletoddie, his eldest son, now at Oxford. Castletoddie is not yet of age, and poor Puntmore looks forward to a big job when his son attains that dignity. There will be what is called a resettlement on Castletoddie's majority; that is to say, that a family compact will be entered into to perpetuate the absurd system which has prevailed hitherto, for the sole and avowed purpose that the old Dicington blood shall continue attached in some way, be the same more or less to the soil which the first Puntmore wheedled out of bluff Hal, just then gorged with the plunder of the monasteries. It is an article of family faith that nothing is to go out of the family, that plantations, plate, and pictures all come under the same category. The head of the family is entitled to certain respect as such—not on his own account as a peer, I had nearly written as a man—but as the apex of the clan, its corner-stone for the time being. He is never allowed to forget that he is only what is called a tenant for life—that he is not by any manner of means the owner of the Puntmore estates. His life-interest is

encumbered by a thousand charges. There are the settlements made by his father and grandfather in favour of his sisters, his cousins, and his aunts. Three generations of dowagers batten upon the Puntmore estates. No one has a word to say against these gentle—I mean noble—women. They have been, doubtless, all that was comforting and rejoiceful to the souls of their sweethearts and their spouses—that is, in their youth ; for the high keel-like Norman profiles of them, as they sit at grand family gatherings at Totterdown Park, are now rather suggestive of dignity than benignity. They are settled firmly upon the Puntmore estates, and until they are pleased to give up their haughty ghosts they will draw their incomes punctually—whether Puntmore's farms are let or not. It is a small matter to them that things are going ill with Puntmore himself—that his land is unlet because undrained, and therefore unlettable ; that his rent-roll is a dead letter ; that his only really remunerative property is a slum in Hoxton, brought into the family by a mésalliance with a baker's daughter a hundred years ago, the rents of which are punctually paid by the tenth-rate clerks and other persons of the poor-devil class who inhabit it. All this is of little moment to the persons duly settled and charged upon the property. They bewail the sorrows of the head of the house. Poor man, they are heartily sorry for him, but they draw their jointure all the same, for they also have claims upon them, poor souls. Lives in the family of Dicington run short—encumbered estates and expensive habits generally worrying them into the grave before forty-five. Quick returns in this noble family by no means signify sound profits. With each generation, and each Derby that he does not win, the owner of Totterdown Park becomes poorer and poorer ; his title-deeds become more and more a tangle of lawyers' verbiage ; his land poorer ; his tenants worse ; until at last he looks aghast at deserted farms and crumbling homesteads—at thistles instead of wheat—at rabbits instead of sheep. There are, it is true, pictures at Totterdown—pictures celebrated in the annals of art—pictures lent, trustees agreeing thereto, to national loan collections. These pictures represent a vast sum of money, but poor Puntmore cannot sell a single Teniers or Jan Steen. They are heirlooms, every one of them as strictly entailed as everything else on the premises. He cannot afford to invite much

company to see these treasures of art, and, if he could, his friends would vastly prefer a cigar and a stroll round the stables or kennels to looking at old pictures. He would like to sell his pictures very much indeed, as he would, like the immortal Barry Lyndon, be glad to cut down the trees visible from Totterdown. But he dare touch neither pictures nor trees until his son is of age, when the shackles in which he has lived are to be fastened anew upon his son, who will, for the bribe of an income, agree to "re-settle" the property, as it is called.

It is absolutely necessary in this place to point out the method in which the idea of primogeniture and the practice of entail act upon the landed classes in this country. As far as the "law" of primogeniture is concerned, the defenders of that and every other abuse are partly—and only partly—right in denying that it ever comes into operation. Now and then it does so, and the change inflicts wrong upon somebody ; but, setting this aside for a moment, is it not ridiculous that a law should exist, by virtue of which any freehold land a man may die possessed of, passes, if he die without a will, to his eldest son ? Why should this peculiarity attach to land, and to nothing else ?

Simply because land is held to be a kind of sacred thing, differing from all other property whatsoever. Simply because its sacredness springs from the political strength communicated by its ownership ; because the possession of land is the prerogative of the class which has ruled England since the Revolution, and nearly rules it now ; because land is the one class of property represented by the House of Lords, and is moreover enormously over-represented in the House of Commons ; because a landed estate is a mark of what is called "gentility"—a quality so highly prized that shrewd men of business often invest a share of their fortune in land, at prices which bring them interest at the rate of two per cent. per annum, thus sacrificing half the value of their money for the consideration involved in the possession of land.

It is of no moment that persons possessed of property in land do not frequently die intestate. This is quite beside the question whether land should have a separate destiny marked out for it. Moreover, there is, despite the assertions of the lawyers, who assert that there is no such thing as a law of primogeniture, a great deal of downright injustice caused by this so-called dormant

law. To understand how this occurs, let us change our point of view from Totterdown Park to Atalanta Terrace, Number Nine, which is tenanted by John Buggins, sometime proprietor of the Cat and Cream Jug, a snug house in the public line, where much more "cream" of the "valley" than of the farm was vended by portly Buggins. During his tenancy of the Cat and Cream Jug, Buggins apparently made his living by driving furiously about to other taverns and partaking freely of the liquors vended in those rival establishments, and in the intervals of this almost perpetual motion playing at cribbage for rather high stakes with other red-faced, burly men whom he designated his "pals." Whether Buggins won money at cribbage and at Newmarket, or whether his daughter's skilful management of the Cat and Cream Jug enriched him, is of no moment. Buggins was rich. He owned railway shares, gas shares, and water shares. He had money in the Bank of England; his account at his bankers was large. One day Buggins, perhaps from pondering over the Creamjug instead of over his bacca-box, became enamoured of a purely country life, and determined to become a landed proprietor. Before this he had made his will, dividing his property equally among his children, excepting his eldest son, who, being a bad lot, was cut off with a shilling. Without thinking of his will, Buggins sold out his gas and water and railway shares, and with the proceeds purchased the freehold of that eligible estate known as Greenhorne Grange, and then died suddenly after a hearty supper eaten in a society known as the "Convivial Kangaroos."

When Buggins was buried it was remarked that the eldest son, whose whereabouts was unknown to the remainder of the family, turned up suddenly, and assumed his part as chief mourner in an authoritative manner, very shocking to his brothers and sisters, who knew all about the will and its contents. When the document was read, glances were exchanged between the favoured children, and some inward pity bestowed upon the outcast, who, after various enlistments and desertions, and a general career of scampishness, had become the by-word of his family. When the lawyer had made an end of reading the will, the first-born merely said: "There is no mention, that I have heard, of the estate—the freehold estate—my father recently bought; therefore it is mine. Please communicate with

my solicitors, Messrs. Cutter & Edgeley, Lincoln's Inn Fields. Good morning." And the good children went without the shares they had hoped for, and Sir Prodigal became a landed proprietor.

There is not the slightest exaggeration in the above account. If a man die without a will, or leave a will in which his freehold property is not bequeathed, that property will go to the next heir, that is, in default of children of his own, to a remote nephew or cousin, to the prejudice of the man's wife even. The wife may, like the good children in the typical case just recited, have assisted her husband in making his fortune by her thrift and industry, or she may have brought him the nucleus of it in hard cash. All this is of no matter if he die without a will, or having made one, leaving his personal property to her, afterwards convert money and shares into freehold land.

Of what use can it be, as is done every day in England, to deny that there is a law of primogeniture, when any person buying freehold, and wishing his eldest son or his heirs to own it, has no occasion to bequeath it to him or them? The law takes charge of the land and gives it to the heir, thus recognising distinctly the pre-eminent rights of the first-born. This is insisted upon in this place, because nothing is more common than for sturdy, old-fashioned people to declare that the law of primogeniture is a phantom of the revolutionary brain. It is no phantom at all. It proclaims the course of English law, unless controlled by the testament of a proprietor: a document which in a vast number of cases would be quite unnecessary if the law were only placed upon a proper footing.

Another important point in which the sacredness of land is acknowledged is that of debt. If a person dies leaving real estate (land), and personal estate duly bequeathed to various persons, and have contracted debts in the interval between the making of the will and his death, there would, it might be imagined, be made an assessment upon the whole of the persons taking property under the will. Each should, it might appear to unsophisticated persons, pay his or her share of the debt in exact proportion to the amount received under the will. There would be a "discount," as it were, off each legacy. Nothing of the kind occurs. Debts must be paid, in the present state of the law, out of personal property. The sacred soil must not be

meddled with until every shilling of the personality is absorbed. Then, and not till then, is lawful debt recoverable from real estate. Not till the whole personal property of the dead man has been taken from his heirs, and applied to the payment of his debts, can the landholding heir be approached. Real estate is now liable to debts generally if the personal estate be insufficient. But "simple contract creditors," as they are called, have no charge on the land; their remedy is merely personal. Thus, again, in the matter of liability for debt is an exception made in favour of land over other species of property; a preference given to that section of goods which follows the law of primogeniture.

There is no doubt whatever upon this point. Case after case has occurred in which personal estate has been converted into land, and debts incurred in order to improve and maintain the latter, all which debts fall upon the personal estate, leaving, perhaps, the widow a beggar, while the real estate descended to the heir-at-law without incumbrance. And this is still the law of the land, only to be set aside by special provision.

The law of primogeniture is, however, a small matter in its direct operation when compared with the fuller expression of the same principle, as carried out in the law and custom of entail and settlement.

In this case, as in that of the law of primogeniture, the seeker for information from legal sources is met with a curt denial. There is no such thing as a law of strict entail, he will be told. He will be laughed at for want of technical knowledge, and told that he has filled his brain with the dreams of demagogues. He will return home and refer to his legal handbook, which will inform him that "strict and continuous entails have long been virtually abolished," but that the remembrance of them lingers in country places, where the idea of "heir land," which must perpetually descend from father to son, still exists. Puzzled at this, he will make enquiries, and will be told that the law of entail is a dream, that the great estates of the Cavendishes and other ducal families could be sold, and so forth. Let us see what truth there is in all this denial.

Technically, a great deal. What is called "strict entail" exists no longer in theory: that is to say, that the will of a dead man is so far curtailed that he cannot leave his property to a perpetual series of life tenants,

heir succeeding heir "in *sæcula sæculorum*," that the name of the founder may endure for ever. This dream of human vanity is at an end: the reach of the dead hand is curtailed. There is no law of perpetual entail. But it flourishes under the name of settlement to such an extent that two-thirds at least of the landed property in this country is virtually entailed, and very strictly. This is how it is done.

Mr. Joshua Williams, a great authority upon the law of real property, thus explains the existing process: "In families where the estates are kept up from one generation to another, settlements are made every few years for this purpose. Thus, in the event of a marriage, a life estate merely is given to the husband; the wife has an allowance for pin-money during the marriage, and a rent-charge or annuity by way of jointure for her life, in case she should survive her husband. Subject to this jointure, and to the payment of such sums as may be agreed on for the portions of the daughters and younger sons of the marriage, the eldest son who may be born of the marriage is made by the settlement tenant-in-tail, and so on to the others; and in default of sons the estate is usually given to daughters, not successively, however, but as tenants-in-common-in-tail, with cross remainders in-tail. By this means the estate is tied up until some tenant-in-tail attains the age of twenty-one years, when he is able, with the consent of his father, who is tenant for life, to bar the entail with all remainders. Dominion is thus again acquired over the property, which dominion is usually exercised in a re-settlement on the next generation, and," adds Mr. Williams triumphantly, "thus the property is preserved in the family."

This explanation, lucid as it is for lawyers' English, is susceptible perhaps of being made a little clearer. It signifies, in the first place, that the dead hand can only extend its paralysing influence to two generations—that is to say, he can make his son a tenant-for-life, compelled to transmit the estate intact to his unborn son, or the next heir, whomsoever he may be. This is all that any law of settlement can do, and that it is a great deal too much the law itself in fact recognises. When any heir in-tail reaches the age of twenty-one years, he and his father can practically do what they like in barring the entail, and if the heir choose to remain unmarried, or otherwise avoid the necessity of making any settlement until his father died, he would

become absolute owner of the property. It is said that one of the great ducal estates is actually in an "unsettled" condition. The present incumbent made no re-settlement on his majority, and the heir-in-tail is unmarried and has reached middle-age without "re-settling" the estate. He will, therefore, on the death of his father, become actual proprietor of his land, a situation enjoyed by only a minute percentage of landholders. This is what may occur. What does occur generally is very different.

There is a great deal of human nature in the ordinary course of things. Let us suppose that Lord Puntmore himself, having married in due season, and executed settlements making his prospective eldest son tenant-in-tail, has lived on until that child of promise has reached the age of twenty-one years. The youth has been given such allowance as his father's costly habits and large family will permit of up to that date, but no sooner does he wish to marry, and consequently to require a more ample establishment, than he is requested to "re-settle" the property on his possible heirs. This is the "tying-up" process in which lawyers, for obvious reasons, take so much delight. Puntmore has never been a genuine owner of the estate himself. He has not troubled his head much about the matter, it is true; but if he had, he could have done nothing. He has made the best of his time, and will pass on the whole encumbered domain to his son, strictly "settled" on his heir. With a shrug of his shoulders, Puntmore wishes the lad joy of it.

A REVIVED HOBBY.

THE refinements, hobbies, "fads," &c., connected with books are not one whit behind the manias for blue china, Queen Anne furniture, lace, and the rest. Paris is the place for these fancies, and a number of enterprising publishers are ceaselessly busy pouring out streams of hot-pressed, daintily-printed little volumes, issued, like the proofs of a print, in stages or classes, and carefully numbered. Some are "pulled" on Chinese paper, some on "papier Whatman," which seems to be in high favour in France. These exquisite little works are pieces of art—the printing, the ink, the size of the type, everything being directed by artistic proportion. In short, these French works are almost perfect, and when bound artistically are worthy

of a casket. Sometimes, in reprints of old works of the last century, the original plates of etchings by Eisen, Marillier, and other little masters, have been discovered, and are united to the modern text and paper with exquisite art. The prices, too, for these gems are extravagant to a degree, and the collector who would secure choice copies of *Manon Lescaut*, and the whole series of little romances, poems, &c., must have a long and deep purse indeed.

Another mania of the elegant collector is that of huge works, with etchings and other illustrations, such as *L'Art*, the *Gazette des Beaux Arts*; which, as they all admit of "stages" and "states," open up bibliomaniac gambling, gradual rise in price, and the rest of it. But it is certainly overdone, and no purse could keep pace with the overflowing supply. Here our neighbours are not only far ahead of us, but literally alone. Their wonderful fancy runs riot almost. Paris, it must be recollected, is the artistic capital, not of France only, but of Europe, and the art publisher there is equally publisher at Berlin, Vienna, and other capitals. But these, after all, are not the immediate subject of our consideration, which is yet another "fad," and which has really more sound sense and reason than many of the leading "fads" of the time.

This is the old-fashioned practice of what is called "illustrating" some favourite work by portraits and pictures of every person and subject that is alluded to in the work, a pursuit that in the case of a very favourite pet-book offers a sort of fascination, and may be carried on for years without much damage to pocket or serious pursuits. The result is extremely interesting, and even valuable—that is, when taste, judgment, and experience are brought to the task. But even under rude conditions a very favourable and profitable result may be secured, for the principle is really good and genuine.

Let us take the case of so well-known a work as *Boswell's Life of Johnson*, which is a very suitable one for the purpose, and which the print-sellers are more often employed to thus adorn than any other. Its merit is, of course, the vast number of personages, living and dead, towns, countries, and events, alluded to in it, and the inexhaustible variety offered of treatment. Let us follow the process.

The first step will be to secure, say the large quarto edition in two volumes, which will be put into the hands of a professional

person to inlay—that is, to insert each leaf in a large margin; a very nice and delicate process, done in a hot-press; the edges being first given “a feather-edge”—that is, fined down to about half their thickness, so that the joinings shall offer no “ridge.” This converts the book into large, handsome volumes, so that prints of large size can be used. The first edition of the *Tour to the Hebrides* should be also secured and similarly treated. Next begins the hunt for prints, and not only for prints, but for play-bills, advertisements, old newspapers, autograph letters, water-colour drawings, and so on.

Johnson himself is of the chief importance, and portraits of him in every shape and size must and can be gathered together. The interest of this will be seen from the fact that each will represent him at a different period of his life, when young, middle-aged, old, &c.; these being judiciously distributed through the volumes at the proper eras. The same with Boswell. And as each print is dated, the whole arrangement has a sort of historical merit, and the comparison and progress becomes highly interesting and curious. So with views of towns like Lichfield, which must be selected as they appeared at the date mentioned. There is mention of Mr. Green's museum in that town: and there are curious prints to be had of it. So with Temple Bar, and the heads stuck upon it, of which there are also prints. So with the old portions of London now pulled down, like Butcher's Row, near Temple Bar, where Johnson met his old friend Edwards; the taverns in Fleet Street; the King's Library, &c. Then the advertisement put out by Johnson of his school at Edial in the Gentleman's Magazine must be hunted up and inlaid, as must be all these various prints, whatever their size; the playbill for the very night of Mrs. Abington's benefit, when Johnson attended in state; a copy of the catalogue of his books; views of Drury Lane Theatre as it appeared then; of Garrick as Archer in *The Beaux Stratagem*, and other characters alluded to in the work; of the scenes at Ranelagh Gardens, at Vauxhall, and the Pantheon; and thus will be gradually formed a perfect panorama of the manners, customs, and appearance of the various persons and the places they frequented. The portraits, indeed, of fine execution, good mezzotints, or coloured in red chalk, like the old graceful Bartolozzi drawings, will be the chief adornment.

When all is tolerably complete, the book, now swollen to five or six times its original bulk, must be divided into portions, each portion becoming a volume. Next title-pages are specially printed, with Vol. I., Vol. II., &c., and the whole may be bound temporarily in boards, which will admit of further additions; but it is generally handed over to Riviere, or some master, and sumptuously and stoutly bound. The effect of turning over the pages is sometimes dazzling, and no modern illustrated book can compete with it. All these little loose prints and scraps that have floated down to us on the surface of the waters, escaping destruction so wonderfully, belong to their age, and are insignificant; but fixed in their place, and part of a collection, they become full of meaning.

In the market such works, when directed by taste and labour, are worth great prices; and, indeed, there is a great and special value in them.

Works like *The Romance of the English Stage*, with about one hundred poor magazine portraits of actors and actresses, bound up, are priced in catalogues at from sixteen to twenty guineas; but the sums asked and given for really great works chiefly by opulent Americans, are of vast amount. Not many years ago Mr. Harvey, the well-known collector in St. James's Street, received a commission from a gentleman to illustrate *Boswell* without limit of expense, with the result that it became stored with autograph letters of all the leading personages, original water-colour portraits, and proofs before letters; the sum given amounting to over two thousand pounds. Mr. Harvey, indeed, stands at the head of the professors of this system, and has brought it to the dignity of an art. He knows what choice things really are, and to pass his windows daily might be turned to profit, as a sort of education. Here one might at least learn what ignorance is shown in the sneers about “proofs” and different “states,” but which really almost signify different prints, so totally opposite is a really brilliant impression to a poor one. A few years back he made up an edition of the *Life of Kemble*, in half-a-dozen sumptuously bound quartos, overflowing with choice things, and the price of which was one hundred and eighty pounds. Forster's *Goldsmith* has been similarly treated, as also Brayley's *London Theatres*, Smith's *Book for a Rainy Day*, Nollekens's *Life and Times*. Last, not least, was the splendid illustration

of Forster's *Life of Dickens*, which, for its variety and the surprising quantity of illustrations of modern faces and places, was perfectly astonishing. This truly beautiful work has been secured by an English collector for three hundred and fifty pounds.

It will be thought, perhaps, that this pastime will be beyond the reach of modest purses; but such is not the case. The present writer is now illustrating his *Boswell*, and has succeeded in getting together some four or five hundred interesting prints all of the last century, at prices, on an average, from fourpence to a shilling. When complete probably twenty pounds will cover the whole. Of course, this does not represent outlay in the shape of time and knowledge, in exploring old portfolios and out-of-the-way bookstalls. In the curious old "wynds" of Bloomsbury, hard by to Red Lion Square, and also in Long Acre, and thereabouts, are little dark shops, devoted to scraps and prints, and here you find professors of the art, strange, well-informed beings, who spend their days and nights "snipping" up and trimming old prints, and putting them away in boxes like those in a haberdasher's shop—each according to a subject; so that if you asked for "owls," a collection would be brought forward. I wot of one with whom I used to have many a talk, and who has the most wonderful collection of Cruikshank's engravings, which he cannot bring himself to part with. You enter and find him in his shirt-sleeves, busy "laying down" or snipping away. He knows your taste, and the subject on whose trail you are, and by each visit has secured and put aside a few "curiosities." "I have got you," he will tell you, "the view of Johnson's house at Lichfield. Here is the set of three, of Vauxhall Gardens. Here is Garrick delivering the ode at the Stratford Jubilee," &c. In these boxes are treasures, choice mezzotints by M'Ardle and Smith, at choice prices; and yet at the very moderate sums of a shilling and half-a-crown some dainty little copperplates of Mrs. Abington and Mrs. Hartley.

There are legends in the business of some prodigious efforts in this direction. The most remarkable and gigantic was the copy of Pennant's *History of London*, which was bequeathed to the British Museum by Mr. Crowle, and cost that gentleman seven thousand pounds; and the *Illustrated Clarendon and Burnet*, formed by the late Mr. Sutherland, of Gower Street, and con-

tinued by his widow, who has munificently presented it to the Bodleian Library, cost upwards of twelve thousand pounds. This, perhaps the richest pictorial history which exists, or is likely to exist, deserves more than a passing notice. It contains nearly nineteen thousand prints and drawings. There are seven hundred and thirty-one portraits of Charles the First, five hundred and eighteen of Charles the Second, three hundred and fifty-two of Cromwell, two hundred and seventy-three of James the Second, and four hundred and twenty of William the Third. The collection fills sixty-seven large volumes. Forty years were spent in this pursuit. The catalogue of the illustrations, of which a few copies only were printed for distribution as presents by Mrs. Sutherland, fills two large quarto volumes. There are copies of Byron's works, and Scott's works, each illustrated with many thousands of prints and drawings, each increasing almost daily.

"Grainger"—a Herculean task—has been several times attempted. The late Mr. Forster purchased a copy at a good price, extending to a vast number of volumes; and, starting on this foundation, continued to augment it till his death. It is now in the South Kensington Museum, to which he bequeathed it. A congenial writer has said apropos of this work :

"The system of which we now speak was not fully developed until the publication of Grainger's *Biographical History of England*. Something may be said in favour of those who, with gentle dulness and patient industry, haunted the print-sellers' shops to collect all the engraved portraits which Grainger had enumerated. There is a charm in the human face divine, although it must needs be powerful to call forth—as it does—twenty, or thirty, or fifty guineas from a collector's pocket for a coarsely executed cut of some Meg Merrilies, some Tom of Bedlam, or some condemned criminal of which the only value is being mentioned by Grainger. However, the dross is always the dearest portion of a collector's treasure, be it in books or prints. Strutt's *Dictionary of Engravers*, to be completely 'illustrated' in a collector's eyes, should contain every work of every engraver mentioned in it (Hollar alone would cost ten thousand pounds could a set of his works be procured); yet this has been attempted."

Here is a good specimen, with an unctuous flavour as of a succulent dish.

We seem to lap up the sentences. It invites a gastronome to be purchaser. "Profuse collection," "fine and rare mezzotints," are good terms and inviting.

"Anecdotes, Observations, and Characters of Books and Men, collected from the Conversations of Mr. Pope, and other eminent persons of his time, by the Reverend Joseph Spence, edited with Notes and a Memoir of the Author by S. W. Singer; one volume folio, extended to three volumes, by a profuse collection of fine and rare mezzotint and other engraved portraits and autograph letters, divided as follows: Vol. I. contains ninety-eight Portraits and Views, and a fine Drawing of Shenstone's portrait (engraved as a frontispiece to an edition of his works), and of Pope's Villa, and Twickenham Church, with Pope's Monument, &c., and Autograph Letters, signed, of Pope, very fine; Dr. Johnson, very fine; Bishop Warburton, Horace Walpole, M.S. Verses addressed to Spencer, and Signatures to Documents of Sir Robert Walpole, Wm. Congreve the Dramatist, and Louis the Fourteenth. Vol. II., frontispiece, View of Pope's Villa, after J. M. W. Turner, by Pye, a splendid proof in the earliest state, before any letters, on india paper, very rare; seventy-eight Portraits and Autograph Letter of the Duke of Buckingham, addressed to Pope, also his Signature to a document; Dr. J. Wharton, Harley Earl of Oxford, the Earl of Peterborough, Eustace Budgell, and Signatures of George the Second when Prince of Wales, rare, also his Signature when King; the Marquis of Halifax, G. Stepney, and Sir Wm. Turnbull, and Drawings of Milton's Monument, and portrait of Sir T. More. Vol. III. Sixty-three Portraits, Autograph Letter of Lord Chancellor Cowper and Ralph Allen, and Signatures of the Duke of Newcastle, Duchess of Marlborough, Lord Godolphin, David Mallet, James the Second when Duke of York, Speaker Onslow; Colley Cibber, Wilkes, and Booth, to a paper relating to Drury Lane Theatre, very rare; appropriate Title-pages printed for this copy, richly bound in red morocco extra, ornamented borders on sides, gilt edges, by Riviere."

The original work can be picked up for a few shillings, but by this system of rich dressing it reaches the figure of one hundred and sixty guineas. But what is this to a poor quarto by Hayley—the *Della Cruscan*—a Life of George Romney, with portrait, a good copy of which can be had for five

shillings. Under this cookery see what an appetising dish it becomes:

"Romney (George), A magnificent and unique copy of Hayley's Life of this celebrated Artist, inlaid and bound in five volumes, folio size, twenty-six and a half inches by eighteen and a half inches, and illustrated with a splendid collection of Portraits, Views, and Autograph Letters, including about eighty subjects engraved after Romney's own Paintings, among which are a number of beautiful proof impressions of his exquisite Portraits of Lady Hamilton; Titles and an Index of Contents printed expressly for this copy. Richly bound in red morocco extra, gold borders on sides, gilt edges, by Riviere." The price for this book in its new state is three hundred and fifty pounds.

Or is not this more appetising still?

"Thomson (James), The Seasons, illustrated with beautiful engravings by Bartolozzi and Tomkins, from Pictures painted for the Work by W. Hamilton, R.A., one volume, large folio, 1796. Divided into Four Volumes, as follows: Vol. I. Spring, illustrated with fifty-three extra Engravings and two Drawings. Vol. II. Summer, illustrated with sixty-four extra Engravings and six Drawings. Vol. III. Autumn, illustrated with sixty-eight extra Engravings and one Drawing. Vol. IV. Winter, illustrated with thirty-seven extra Engravings and one Drawing. Making altogether Two-hundred and twenty-two extra Engravings and Ten Drawings. The Engravings comprise a most charming and beautiful Collection of the choicest description of Subjects in Mezzotint, line Engravings, and the Bartolozzi School, illustrating Occupations, Amusements, Sports, Pleasures, and other various attributes of the Seasons, ancient and modern, by and after Hollar, Goltzius, Watteau, Lancret, Boucher, Hearne, Hamilton, Constable, Collins, Bartolozzi, Wheatley, Gainsborough, Singleton, Woollett, Vivares, J. M. W. Turner, Landseer, &c., &c., and fine Etchings of Landscapes by Waterloo and Strutt, all brilliant impressions, many being choice proofs before letters. Among the Drawings is a very fine one in water-colours by R. Hills, Sir W. C. Ross, &c., and two very fine ones in Indian Ink, by John Martin; the whole forming a most delightful collection of subjects, illustrative of this charming descriptive poem. The four volumes are splendidly bound in green morocco extra,

the sides beautifully ornamented and lined with cream-coloured paper, with rich gold borders, gilt edges, by Riviere, rendering this one of the most sumptuous and magnificent copies ever offered for sale. Two hundred and forty pounds."

Such are the costly literary enjoyments of the opulent literati.

SET IN A SILVER SEA.

BY B. L. FARJEON.

CHAPTER XVIII. (CONTINUED).

" WHILE I was contemplating this picture of despair, doubly strange in one who was herself but a child in years, the lady's servant returned, and others with him. Outside the hut I heard the pawing of horses' feet. Seeing his mistress in tears upon the ground, the man raised his whip threateningly.

" 'I warned you to be civil to my lady,' he said.

" 'Be careful,' I cried, with a look which prevented the blow; 'if you strike, your life will be in danger.'

" The lady rose, and stood between us.

" 'You forget,' she said to her servant, with more dignity than I supposed her capable of, 'that this man has given me the shelter of his roof.' And turning to me, she held out her hand, and said in a tone of much sweetness, 'I thank you, friend.'

" I touched her hand, and bent my head to her; I was more than repaid. Soon she was gone, and the storm was raging round her; but there was a more enduring storm in her young heart. Friendless, too, she appeared to be, and dependent on herself, despite that she was surrounded by servants who addressed her as 'My lady.'

" It was not until an hour afterwards that I discovered she had taken the baby's shoe with her.

" During the night I thought much of her; her grief, her youth, her beauty, her apparent innocence and inexperience, had deeply impressed me. In the sobbing of the storm I seemed to hear the echo of her wail, Oh, baby, baby! Oh, my heart, my heart! And with the eyes of my mind I saw her slight and delicate figure winding its way through the mournful forest, searching for love that was dead. These thoughts kept me awake; and I was also in some anxiety about myself, deeming it almost certain that the

adventure was the prelude to more startling events.

" This proved to be the case. I did not visit Evangeline on the following day, fearing that I might be watched and tracked. In the afternoon two gentlemen on horseback drew up at my hut, and, alighting, gave their horses in charge of a groom who attended them. The gentlemen conversed together for a few moments, and it appeared as if one were trying to persuade the other to come into my hut with him. I saw their actions through the crevice of my door, which was not quite closed, but I did not see the faces of the gentlemen, their backs being towards me. The younger man shook his head, and waving his hand around—with an air of affectation, as it appeared to me—threw himself languidly upon the ground, and interlacing his fingers behind his head, gazed up at the clouds through the intervening leaves and branches. The other gentleman unceremoniously pushed open the door, and entered.

" Before me stood Mauvain.

" The same easy, polished gentleman as of old, richly dressed, arrogant, supercilious, and bearing, as he always did, the air of a man accustomed to be obeyed. Time had dealt lightly with him; something he may have owed to art, but he seemed scarcely five years older than when I left him on the seashore quite fifteen years ago. He regarded me with a gentle smile.

" 'Ranf,' he said, in a quiet, questioning tone, 'not his spirit?'

" 'Ranf,' I replied, 'in solid flesh and bone.'

" 'I am delighted,' he said.

" 'It is a good thing,' I said, imitating his tone of courteous banter, 'to be able to delight so fine a gentleman.'

" 'Whimsical as ever. It is surprising.'

" 'That I am whimsical?'

" 'That you are alive. It is—if you will pardon me—really astonishing.'

" 'I pardon you readily. The unfortunate have an unfortunate knack of living.'

" 'And your philosophy has ripened. Ranf, did you know I had returned from exile?'

" 'No.'

" 'You did not take the trouble to ascertain?'

" 'No.'

" 'Why?'

" 'I did not wish to be troubled.'

" 'You believed I should trouble you if our paths in life crossed again?'

" 'I was sure of it. It is your way.'

"Truly, it is my way. Myself first, others afterwards. A selfish nature, I am afraid.'

"You are a good judge.'

"Ranf, in all my experiences I have never met a shrewder observer than yourself, nor a shrewder reader of character.'

"Shall I read yours?" I asked.

"For Heaven's sake, no," he cried, laughing heartily and gently; in his angriest moods Mauvain was never violent. "Spare me, I beg."

"He went to the door, and called, 'Harold!' and receiving no answer, called again, 'Harold!' and walking to the spot where his friend was lying, leant over him. I stood on the threshold observing his movements.

"The fellow is asleep," he said, rejoining me, "dreaming of the fantastic and impossible. Like myself, Ranf, a man of sentiment. Well, let him sleep; you and I can talk together more privately. I will take a seat if you will allow me." I pointed to one, and presently he continued: "I can hear the sound of the waves beating on the shore; I can feel the fresh morning air blowing on my hot cheeks. In the light of a beautiful sunrise, we spoke some hard truths to each other."

"You expressed, in your fashion, gratitude for the service I rendered you."

"I remember; you were scarcely more complimentary to me, but what I said I meant."

"I was not less sincere. Sometimes, after you were gone, I wondered how it had fared with you."

"And I," said Mauvain, in his pleasantest tone, "never wasted a thought upon you."

"It was like you. Were you long away?"

"It is eight years since fortune threw a feather to me across the silver seas, upon which I floated back to my native land."

"You speak as though you were not happy in exile."

"Who is? No; I was not happy, although the land which sheltered me is the fairest on earth's surface, a land of happiness and contentment and plenty, a very paradise for those without ambition. But I am almost forgetting; I came here to reward you for your attention to a fair friend of mine."

"You owe me for more than that."

"I do not dispute it; I owe you my life. I admit it frankly; I am in your

debt, and shall be glad to repay you. If I remember aright, you did not accept from me one piece of gold."

"Your memory serves you faithfully. I did not accept from you one piece of gold."

"You did not even ask for it."

"I did not even ask for it."

"He frowned, and there was no friendliness in his eyes as they rested on my face, but I knew that the advantage was entirely on my side as long as he believed himself to be in my debt."

"Ask now," he said, drawing a full purse from his pocket. "My fair friend regretted she had not her purse with her last night."

"I am sorry to hear it; I gave her credit for a higher nature."

"Why, hunchback! You did not look for any other kind of reward."

"She thanked me; that was enough."

"You have not named a sum," said Mauvain impatiently.

"I am not to be paid in gold," I said. "The fairest land on earth's surface which you have described must be a favoured spot indeed. Is it inhabited by spirits?"

"By human beings, Ranf—veritable men, women, and children, charmingly simple in their habits and modes of life; industrious, frugal, virtuous. Flowing with milk and honey is the Silver Isle, and with the milk of human kindness. Rare enough you must have found this latter quality, Ranf. You have wrestled with the world, I do not doubt, and have found out how strong it is."

"I considered before I replied. Another life more precious than my own was in my keeping. A strange idea was forming itself in my mind—to be rid of the gnawing anxiety which beset my days; to leave the false world behind me, and commence a new life in another land where I was not known, and where I could watch over Evangeline and see her grow into beautiful womanhood! Such a prospect contained possibilities which made my pulse beat high."

"I gained one victory," I said.

"Not riches, evidently."

"No."

"Nor fame."

"No."

"What, then?"

"Love."

"He stared at me in astonishment, a proof that the lady who had visited me

the previous night was not in sympathy with him. Had there been perfect confidence between them she would have related to Mauvain the substance of our conversation.

“‘You!’ he exclaimed.

“‘Even I, deformed as I am.’

“‘He shrugged his shoulders. ‘There is no accounting for a woman’s vagaries. Does she live?’

“‘Who?’

“‘The woman who threw herself away upon you.’

“‘The only human tie I have in the world is a child. Question me no further on the subject; my tongue is sealed.’

“‘I declare in good faith,’ said Mauvain, ‘that you have in you some of the instincts of a gentleman.’

“‘I declare in good faith,’ I retorted, ‘judging the instincts of a gentleman by your code, that if I thought I possessed them and could cut them out of my body, I would do so.’

“‘You are prone to strong utterances,’ said Mauvain, with imperturbable good humour. ‘Were I not in your debt, you should smart for your insolence.’

“‘There is an easy way out of it, if you care to take it.’

“‘I promise you to take it, if it is in my power.’

“‘I can depend upon your promise, I know. Mauvain, you do not need me, even for revenge.’

“‘In sober truth, Ranf, I think I could exist without you.’

“‘And I without you. I am sick of civilisation and the world’s treatment. Dependent upon me is a child whom I love and who loves me. Would the inhabitants of the Silver Isle be willing to do you a service?’

“‘My name is honoured there; they would be glad to render me a service.’

“‘Then give me and the child dependent upon me a free passport there, accompanied by such a recommendation as will ensure us a welcome. When that is accomplished, we will cry quits.’

“‘A whimsical idea,’ he said, looking at me with mingled amusement and thoughtfulness; ‘a very Caliban in an enchanted isle. You would need strong credentials, Ranf, or you would scarcely be welcomed.’

“‘It is not for myself I ask this for,’ I said; ‘it’s for the sake of my child.’

“‘You have my promise; I will endeavour to gratify you.’

“‘He glanced through the open door at his friend, who had not shifted his position.

“‘Harold,’ he called, ‘are you still asleep?’

“‘Wide awake, Mauvain.’

“‘Put life into your sluggish limbs, and come here instantly.’

“‘It appeared to be a difficult task for Harold to accomplish, but it was done in time, and he sauntered lazily towards us.

“‘A handsomer man even than Mauvain, and between twenty and thirty years younger; a man evidently cut in the same mould—disdainful, high-bred, and holding in contempt those beneath him.

“‘The moment he saw me he took from his pocket a small book, and made a sketch of me.

“‘Harold,’ said Mauvain—

“‘One moment, Mauvain,’ cried Harold; ‘such an opportunity comes but once in life. There! I think I have it. Human?’

“‘Answer him, Ranf,’ said Mauvain.

“‘But I turned away, choked with rage. Although my face was from them, I saw a smile on Mauvain’s lips, produced by the thought that his friend had succeeded in wounding me in a vulnerable part.

“‘Yes, Harold,’ said Mauvain, ‘human.’

“‘Taken from the life,’ said Harold, showing his sketch, and they both laughed at it.

“‘Unable to control myself, I plucked the book from Harold’s hand, and tearing the sketch into a hundred pieces, flung it to the air.

“‘You are right, Mauvain,’ said Harold, ‘very human.’

“‘By the way, Ranf,’ said Mauvain, addressing me as though nothing of a disturbing nature had occurred, ‘you have not told me whether this child of yours is a boy or a girl.’

“‘A girl,’ I answered.

“‘A child, too!’ exclaimed Harold softly.

“‘Harold,’ said Mauvain, ‘I am in want of a friend to execute a delicate commission for me. May I select you as that friend?’

“‘You may command me, Mauvain,’ replied Harold, in utter indifference, ‘in any way you please.’

“‘In obliging me, you shall oblige yourself.’

"'Pray,' said Harold, 'do not think of me. Think only of yourself.'

"I gave the young man a sharp look, wondering whether this homethrust were accidental or intentional, but I could not read his face. Its only expression was an expression of weariness.

"'You need rest,' continued Mauvain, 'repose; you have been burning the candle at both ends, Harold.'

"'What does it matter, Mauvain?' asked Harold; 'it must be burnt out to-day, or to-morrow. A year or two more or less is of the smallest importance.'

"'If you have no care for yourself, Harold, your friends must have some for you.'

"'It is kind of them,' murmured Harold, 'of you especially, Mauvain, who have so much pleasure to think of. But I am really not worth the trouble.'

"So perfect was his manner, whether it were real or assumed, that despite the angry feelings he had excited in me, I could not help regarding him with interest.

"'Often and again have you sighed for simplicity, Harold—'

"'I have searched for it all my life.'

"'I wish you to go for me to a country where its spirit dwells. The voyage will do you good. You will thank me.'

"'I do not doubt it. A long voyage, Mauvain?'

"'You will be absent, I should say, not more than three months.'

"'I will go,' said Harold, 'to the ends of the earth to serve you. You would do the same for me.'

"'I am not so sure, Harold. You will have companions.'

"'Yes?'

"'This man,' said Mauvain, pointing to me—

"'I shall be charmed. You are too considerate.'

"'And his daughter.'

"'A double inducement.'

"'I am under an obligation to this man, and he has indicated how I can repay it. Harold, he saved my life.'

"'Really?'

"'There are certain things against him, but his word is to be trusted. For instance, if he says he hates you, you may be certain he means it. And what he may do against you, he will do in the light of day.'

"'You give him a high character, Mauvain, and I take him at your word. I have

no objection to an honest tiger. What I object to—if I object to anything, which I am not sure, it is so troublesome to object—is the rat or the fox.'

"'You will act as my deputy, Harold?'

"'On one condition, Mauvain. I am really sorry to make it, but it is necessary. There are matters upon which I am delicately sensitive, and in which I have no control over myself. It is not my fault; I came into the world so. As did our friend here, with certain imperfections, which he would have avoided had it been in his power. These things are beyond us; we must accept them. Excuse me for making a long speech; but you know I have a horror of a cross eye in man or woman.'

"Mauvain listened, amused, and nodded his head; he was no stranger to his friend's whims.

"'Then,' continued Harold, in the same languid tone, 'I fly from red hair; I faint at the sight of a rat; and I would sooner die than live with a woman without eyebrows.'

"'What is your condition, Harold?'

"'I must see the child before I bind myself irrevocably.'

"'What do you say, Ranf,' said Mauvain.

"I did not hesitate; I knew that in determination this languid young gentleman, who scarcely spoke above his breath, was my equal.

"'I consent,' I replied.

"'Is there time this evening?'

"'No; if your friend will meet me here to-morrow morning I will take him to see my child.'

"'I will be here,' said Harold.

"So it was arranged, and they left me, and I watched their forms fading in the green twilight until they were lost to my sight.

"Before noon Harold presented himself on horseback, his groom behind him, holding the reins of a spare horse. He desired me to mount, and we rode in silence to the forest farm, where the woman brought Evangeline out to meet me. In an instant I was off the horse, and the child was in my arms. Receiving her caresses, and caressing her, I did not for a little while pay attention to Harold, and when, remembering that the happiness of my life depended upon him, I turned to where he sat motionless in the saddle, I noticed that his face was white as death.

"Are you satisfied?" I asked.

"Perfectly," he replied. "I want a kiss from the little maid."

"I raised Evangeline to his height, and he took her in his arms, and kissed her."

"There is no time to lose," he then said; "I must return at once to Mauvain. Come, let us ride fast."

"We rode so fast that I could scarcely keep up with him; only once did he stop, reining up so suddenly that his horse reared upon its haunches.

"You have set your heart upon this," he said.

"Yes."

"Remember, then, that the gratification of your wish depends upon me, and that I have my moods as well as worse men."

"It was the only time I heard him speak with energy, and the next moment he appeared to be aware that his manner was not in consonance with his character. He relapsed into indolence, the colour came back to his face, and we rode more slowly. It happened that we met Mauvain riding with his friends. He separated from them, and cantered towards us.

"Well, Harold?" he said.

"To my surprise, Harold began to laugh, and hold his sides.

"I have seen her, Mauvain," he said, continuing to laugh between his words, "and I thank you for giving me two charming companions."

"You will go, then?"

"I will go, having seen the child."

"I am curious about her. What is she like?"

"Look in the hunchback's face," replied Harold, "and behold her living image. Poor child! But what else was to be expected? And after all, it is none of our

business. Nature throws our sins at our doors, and wise men make haste to bury them. They rise from their graves sometimes, but only cowards are frightened at them. The true philosophy of life is the pursuit of pleasure. Ah! to live in a land where it is always summer! Mauvain, if I die before you—and I believe I shall, my heart is so weak—bury me in flowers; or, if you prefer it, burn me to ashes, and plant a rose-tree in my dust. When shall we sail for the Silver Isle?"

"I have a vessel which can sail in a week."

"The sooner the better. Dismount, hunchback; you can find your way back to your hut a-foot."

He also dismounted, and walked aside with me.

"You have something to ask me," he said.

"Why have you deceived Mauvain?"

"Because I know him, and because I wish to serve the sweet maid you call your child. You should be content."

"I shall be if, after I have shaken the dust of the old world from my feet, I never look upon your face, or the face of your friend again."

"That is as fate wills. I will not promise, hunchback. Life is full of surprises. Observe those leaves travelling with the wind. Which is the master, leaf or air?"

"He left me, and in a week we were on the sea. On the day of our departure, Harold handed me a letter from Mauvain. It contained but a few words—these:

"I know not what name you have given your child. It will ensure you a hearty welcome from the inhabitants of the Silver Isle if you call her by a name which is dear to them—Evangeline."

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